



GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

**News Release**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **College district a finalist in 9<sup>th</sup> annual 'Golden Watchdog' competition**

*Taxpayer group lauds GCCCD for model bond oversight committee*

**EL CAJON** – The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District has been recognized by the San Diego County Taxpayers Association as one of three finalists for its 2004 Greater San Diego Golden Watchdog Award. The district was lauded at a ceremony recently for its independent citizens' bond oversight committee, which keeps an eye on Prop. R construction bond funds approved by local voters in 2002.

Golden Watchdog awards annually recognize local programs that exemplify efficient use of tax dollars and are presented on the same night as the Golden Fleece awards, which shed light on examples of wasteful, inefficient government. This year, SDCTA received more than 150 nominations for the awards from individuals and organizations throughout the county.

GCCCD Governing Board President Ron Kraft said it is gratifying to be acclaimed by the SDCTA, particularly in a year when government spending has been so closely scrutinized because of the monumental state budget crisis.

"We take very seriously our promise to voters that Prop. R dollars will be closely monitored and that they would not be spent in a wasteful fashion," Kraft said. "Recognition by the San Diego Taxpayers Association is validation that our community college district is honoring its commitment to voters.

"The district's strong fiscal management, coupled with the expertise of Gafcon (the consultants serving as program manager of Prop. R construction), has helped create a

very focused bond oversight committee that is knowledgeable and diligent in carrying out its duties.”

Prop. R, widely approved by East County voters in fall 2002, was a \$207 million bond measure, which is paving the way for Grossmont College and Cuyamaca College to renovate or replace aging, overcrowded facilities, make infrastructure changes that will allow facilities to operate more efficiently, and build new structures to meet student needs.

One of the provisions of Prop. R was the appointment of an independent citizens’ bond oversight committee, or CBOC, which ensures that the funds are spent strictly for facilities identified in the local ballot measure. The committee, appointed by the governing board in 2003, includes community members with expertise in construction, procurement and finance, and others representing the broad scope of community interests in the district.

“The CBOC quickly established a subcommittee structure, and an annual work plan for executing bond projects,” said CBOC Chairman Ernie Ewin. “The result has been a truly effective CBOC that is ensuring that Prop. R dollars are spent wisely and in keeping with promises made to the voters.”

In naming the college district as a Golden Watchdog finalist, the taxpayer association praised the CBOC for its effectiveness and innovation.

“The Prop. R CBOC stands as a great example of what a CBOC is supposed to look like and accomplish,” according to SDCTA’s program for the April 21 awards presentation.

Initial use of Prop. R dollars consisted of facilities repair and energy-reduction projects, such as the modernizing of classroom lighting. Prop. R dollars also contributed to the completion of the new Learning and Technology Resource Center at Grossmont College, where a grand opening ceremony is set for 11 a.m. May 21 in the main quad. Grossmont College is at 8800 Grossmont College Drive in El Cajon. For driving and campus maps, go to [www.grossmont.edu](http://www.grossmont.edu) or call (619) 644-7000.

More details about Prop. R can be found by going to the college district Web site, [www.gcccd.net](http://www.gcccd.net), and clicking on “Prop. R News.”

SDCTA is a non-profit, public-interest organization which promotes cost-effective and efficient government and opposes unnecessary new taxes and fees.

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"The Golden Watchdog and Fleece awards every year generate both excitement and dread for officials throughout the San Diego region," said Lisa Briggs, SDCTA executive director. "The purpose of these awards is to inform and educate the taxpayers of San Diego County about the good, the bad and occasionally, the ugly of government efficiency and spending."

Winning the Greater San Diego Golden Watchdog Award was the Chula Vista Elementary School District, praised by the taxpayer association for its efficient use of public dollars in the face of rapid population growth. The top prize, the Grand Watchdog Award, went to the San Diego Convention Center Corp., lauded for its 15 years of economic benefit to the region.

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