

# Valley Forward gives environmental honors

Does it seem to you that going green has become mainstream, or is it simply a trend that will go by the wayside, much as leisure suits, Y2K or the Macarena?

We hear about new sustainability initiatives every day, but the Valley's most prominent environmental association has been spotlighting projects that contribute to our region's ecological health and quality of life for nearly three decades.



**Lori Singleton**  
 Special for The Republic

Valley Forward Association initiated its Environmental Excellence Awards

in 1980 to recognize outstanding contributions to the physical environment of Valley communities. The program has grown significantly and now serves as a benchmark for promoting green, livable communities that conserve natural resources and sustain our unique desert environment. It is an honor for Salt River Project to be the presenting sponsor of this event for the seventh consecutive year. Environmental stewardship has been a guiding principle for SRP since 1903. As such, we are pleased to recognize others in the Valley who share this same commitment.

Highlights of the 2008 awards program:

**Optima Camelview Village** — A multifamily residential project provides downtown Scottsdale with a vibrant, modernist-inspired architecture while incorporating an eco-friendly design. Features include a "green roof" to mitigate the urban heat-island effect.

**Valley National Bank** — Renovation of a bank branch built in 1957 and designed by one of Frank Lloyd Wright's students. Evidence of the

original design, such as 24 skylights that had been hidden in previous remodels, was discovered and re-incorporated. The project represents a creative, adaptive re-use for an engineering company without an over-engineered result and is a wonderful example of the Valley's modern roots.

**Papago Gateway Center** — A six-story, 267,000-square-foot building just north of the Tempe Town Lake, built to LEED-certified Silver standards. It includes a "skin" of operable aluminum louvers that tracks the sun and helps to control the temperature in the building. The

building's long, narrow footprint minimizes the desert's harsh solar exposure on the west, south and east sides while maximizing views.

**Coronado District Residential Addition** — An addition to a historic bungalow in central Phoenix incorporated sustainable-building concepts starting with a pre-engineered recycled metal building system.

Other features include green screens for biomass and shading, one-inch high performance insulated glass, maple lab shelving, low-flow toilets and a bedroom that doubles as a sleeping porch. And best of all, to comply with historic guidelines, the new buildings match the height and roof pitch of the existing building and from the street goes unnoticed.

**Glendale's Outdoor Environmental Classroom** — A place where children and adults can learn about the beauty and importance of the Sonoran Desert in a garden adjacent to the Glendale Public Library. The design is intended to function as a classroom but also acts as a "mediator" between the building and the landscape, contrasting the forms of the landscape to the pure geometry of the building.

**Apollo Group's Go Green Challenge** — A comprehensive and multi-faceted communications program for employees, students and faculty to help them understand their effect on the environment and



to provide them with the tools needed to succeed in adopting long-term sustainable living practices. The project began with a required interactive Sustainability 101 tutorial created as a Web-based course. More than 5,000 employees completed the course and more than 4,500 have also visited the Go Green Web site and pledged to engage in green initiatives.

#### **ASU School of Sustainability —**

The highest honor was presented to the ASU School of Sustainability. In 2008, 28 students graduated from the nation's first-ever class, and more than 200 students are enrolled in the Fall 2008 semester. The mission of the school is to bring together multiple disciplines and leaders to create and share knowledge, and to train a generation that will develop practical solutions to environmental, economic and social challenges of sustainability, especially in urban areas. These students will become stewards of the environment and their legacy will affect generations to come.

Each year, the projects submitted for Valley Forward's Environmental Excellence Awards program are more inspiring and demonstrate a greater commitment to sustainability. The global conversation about climate change, "sustainability" and environmental stewardship makes sense even to those who, in the past, could not fully appreciate its impor-

tance.

I believe that we are beginning to embrace our moral imperative to protect the environment. That should give us tremendous hope for the future.

To learn more about SRP's sustainability efforts and programs to help customers be more sustainable, visit [www.srpnet.com/environment](http://www.srpnet.com/environment).

To learn about how you can become involved in Valley Forward, either as an individual or corporation, visit [www.valleyforward.org](http://www.valleyforward.org).

---

*Lori Singleton is Salt River Project's manager of Sustainable Initiatives and Technologies.*

*The program ... now serves as a benchmark for promoting green, livable communities that conserve natural resources and sustain our unique desert environment.*