

# 2014 GOVERNOR'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

## San Diego Archaeological Center



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Since 1998, the San Diego Archaeological Center has been at the forefront of preserving, promoting, and supporting archaeological collections that are the tangible links to the region's cultural and historical identity. The collections they curate represent the full range of human presence in the San Diego region, including nearly 10,000-year-old artifacts from some of the earliest dated sites discovered in San Diego County. Without the concerted efforts of Center staff, trustees, members, and supporters, a large portion of these historic and prehistoric collections would still be languishing in closets, garages, and warehouses. The Center makes these precious cultural resources available to the public through educational programming, research, and museum exhibits. Their mission is to preserve archaeological collections and promote their educational, scientific and cultural use to benefit a diverse public.

In the past fifteen years they have welcomed 40,352 visitors, delivered workshops and lectures, hosted exhibits and special events, made contact at community events, and provided educational programs for K-12 and college students. The Center's educational programs stress the protection of cultural resources, cultural diversity in communities past and present, and shared human experiences. *Project Archaeology*, geared to the third through seventh grades, gives students a basic understanding of how archaeology works and teaches them to respect and protect our nation's rich cultural heritage. The program addresses basic concepts of archaeology, including the scientific method; how archaeologists do their work and interpret results; and issues in archaeology such as ethics, stewardship of heritage resources, citizenship, and cultural understanding. Higher education partners include UCSD, SDSU, CUSU San Marcos, Palomar College, Miracosta College, and Mesa College.

The Center currently curates artifact collections representing more than 2,000 archaeological sites throughout the region. The Center was purpose-built to effectively preserve, manage, and use archaeological collections and is considered a model institution at the local, state, and national levels. The Center meets requirements of Federal regulation 36 CFR Part 79 (*Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections*) and the State of California *Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections*, and meets and exceeds NAGPRA repatriation standards. With two NPS grants, the Center is able to evaluate collections for items eligible for repatriation under NAGPRA and return them to local tribes.

Since 2006, the Center has partnered with more than fifteen organizations, including state, national, and international universities and agencies, to conduct archaeological research. They believe that curation and the prudent use of curated collections are key to the preservation of California's cultural heritage and regional identity.

Learn more about the San Diego Archaeological Center: <http://sandiegoarchaeology.org/>