

## 2017 CSAC CHALLENGE AWARDS

### **Mariposa Clean Sweep**

#### *Executive Summary*

**Overview:** Mariposa Clean Sweep is a community cleanup event that represents public/private partnership, with collaboration between the County, the local newspaper and a local utility company.

**Challenge:** As a gateway to Yosemite National Park, the town of Mariposa receives more than 1.2 million visitors a year traveling on California State Highway 140 to Yosemite National Park. With that said, it is very important for the town to “shine”, not only for the tourists, but also for potential businesses and/or families that want to relocate to the area. Mariposa County officials frequently receive complaints from downtown business owners and local residents who complain about the garbage and cigarette butts that pollute downtown corridor. The challenge is that nobody wants to take responsibility for the cleanup of the debris. The process used to solve this problem came when the editor of the Mariposa Gazette, who recently relocated to Mariposa County, brought up the issue of the garbage complaints with the Mariposa County economic development specialist. The editor had been involved in community cleanup events in other communities. Together, the two formed a committee of five volunteers and started planning the County’s inaugural “Mariposa Clean Sweep”, Making Our Community Beautiful.

**Innovative Solution:** In order to get the community to take part in a cleanup event, the committee decided to provide incentives. Through the donation of a local utility company, the committee purchased a very lucrative grand prize, a riding lawnmower, from a local merchant who also provided a discount on the equipment. The event was marketed with the riding lawnmower as the incentive, in addition to the plethora of other raffle prizes donated by local businesses.

**Originality:** While this concept has been adopted in many communities in the east coast and Midwest, the town of Mariposa has never had a community cleanup focusing on the town itself. The Mariposa

Clean Sweep was the first community-wide cleanup event and the committee members received many calls of support stating that they had wanted an event like this for years. In addition, the idea to incentivize the event to attract more participants was a new concept; most California communities do not offer incentives for local cleanup events.

**Cost Effectiveness:** The event was budgeted solely by donations. The committee raised a total of \$1,000, which was used to purchase t-shirts and other necessities. Cleanup tools (backs, trash pickers, gloves & safety vests) were all donated by a local public waste company, as was raffle prizes, water and lunch. All promotions were pro-bono via the local newspaper. The money raised was funneled through a local 501c3, since the committee was informal. As the event grows annually, we hope to raise more money to purchase more items and build up the event.

**Results:** The inaugural event proved to be a success. The initial results of the program were more than 100 volunteers showing up to clean the community, great positive feedback from the volunteers/participants, community unity, and a cleaner community. The program has positively impacted the community by instilling a sense of community pride. The event has sparked an interest in continuing to keep the community clean with an "Adopt a Highway" program being adopted.

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**Optional Submission:** flyer submitted