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Climate Change on Tap at 2019 Innovators High Desert Water Summit

*MWA's Half-Day Event to Include Presentations From Water Industry
Experts, Essay Contest Winner Gavin Copeland*

VICTORVILLE, CA — Climate change and its effect on water sustainability will be explored at Mojave Water Agency's (MWA) upcoming 2019 Innovators High Desert Water Summit. The event — which will also include talks on wastewater and showcase extraordinary student achievement — is set for Feb. 8 at the campus of High Desert Church in Victorville and runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Geared toward STEM middle and high school students, the theme for this year's Water Summit is "How Generation Z Will Save the Future of Water in California."

"The growing awareness of the climate and how it is changing has made this an increasingly important topic to discuss," said MWA Board President Carl Coleman. "It is imperative to consider the impact of climate change and how that will affect the future of water sustainability."

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The Water Summit will also feature breakout sessions led by distinguished water industry experts, and a special presentation from Serrano High School senior Gavin Copeland who emerged as this year's MWA Essay Contest winner.

Copeland, 17, was selected to present at the Water Summit after beating out nearly 40 other students across the High Desert. Along with two other finalists, Copeland presented his essay to a panel of judges on Jan. 15, examining how recycled water can be better utilized to help offset depleting groundwater supplies. For his work, Copeland will receive a \$3,000 scholarship.

Apple Valley High School junior Karyn Pham and Sultana High School freshman Jesette Western were selected as the other two essay contest finalists. Both Pham and Western will each receive \$1,000 scholarships.

"The students who participated in this year's essay contest were incredibly thoughtful, displaying skills well beyond their years," MWA Director of Community Outreach and Cultural Relations Yvonne Hester said. "We were so impressed with this group of students, who were all highly intelligent."

In addition to the essay contest, the results of MWA's annual Problem Solvers contest will be revealed. Seven teams faced off against each other in this competition — done in conjunction with the PBS program "Curiosity Quest Problem Solvers" — that tasked students with designing a model water-efficient community. The winning team will receive a \$3,000 scholarship for their school. The two runner-up teams will take home \$1,000 scholarships.

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Vying for the top prize are Melva Davis Academy, Oak Hills High School, Victor Valley High School, Academy for Academic Excellence, University Preparatory, Silverado High School, and La Contenta Middle School.

General admission to the 2019 Innovators High Desert Water Summit is \$10. Students and school representatives will be admitted for free but are still required to register.

Those interested in attending must register by the end of the day on Feb. 4 and may do so at the Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce website business.vvchamber.com/events/details/innovators-high-desert-water-summit-6364

High Desert Church is located at 14545 Hook Blvd, Victorville.

For more information, please contact Public Information Specialist Bryan Kawasaki at bkawasaki@mojavewater.org or 760-946-7001.

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