

What is the purpose of the ARPA Environmental Leadership Award?

I should begin by recognizing ARPA Environment Committee Chairman Scott Hughes who came up with the idea of this award. The ARPA Community Excellence Award recognizes companies and facilities but he felt we needed an award that recognized exceptional community and environmental stewardship by an individual.

The ARPA Environmental Leadership Award Program is a new program recognizing excellence in compliance innovation and industry environmental management activities that have enhanced the public's perception and support of the aggregates industry.

We firmly believe that active environmental management efforts are one of the best ways for an aggregate facility to demonstrate that an operation can be an asset in any community; and that the individuals who manage and work at aggregate operations are both good neighbors, great stewards of the environment and responsible corporate citizens.

The ultimate goal of the ARPA Environment Leadership Award Program is recognizing those individuals who go above and beyond each day by improving the image of local aggregate operations and the mining industry by encouraging, recognizing and generating positive public involvement.

ARPA's honoree epitomizes these key concepts and more.

Sara Cook, Lafarge NA

In her capacity as Environmental Manager, Sara Cook has worked with operations to develop an environmental program centered on a commitment to both compliance and demonstration of proactive environmental policies.

Last year, Sara hosted site tours for the Arizona State Mining Inspector, Maricopa County Flood Control, and the Maricopa County Air Quality Department. Lafarge and ARPA can count on Sara to be highly involved in local, state, and federal regulation development and public comment periods.

Agencies are not the only audience for Sara. Her Public Affairs role is rooted in community based stakeholder efforts. She has been an active member of the

West Valley Mining District Recommendation Committee, and in 2009 and 2010 she held positions as Chair and Vice Chair. Sara facilitates site tours, visits with neighbors, and holds meetings with community members of the board, area public officials, and the media.

In the fall of 2010, Sara took a leadership role with the ARPA Community Tours in both development and as a facility host. In preparation for the tours, she developed a fact sheet and the sustainability information focusing on the importance of aggregate and asphalt production locally.

Sara coordinated an Open House with other plant employees that showcased the health, safety, and environmental sustainability efforts of the Sun City Aggregates plant and an educational activity table for children in attendance.

Sara presents to Arizona State University's CIM 105 introductory course. As a guest presenter, Sara introduces students to the complex regulatory, social, and stakeholder issues facing the industry. By participating as a speaker, she is exposing incoming students to a different career angle for this industry, particularly for women seeking a career in construction materials.

Sara has cultivated a long term partnership with Girl Scout troops from Park Ridge Elementary, a Peoria School less than one mile from the Sun City Plant. AND she orchestrated an array of projects, both at the school and the Lafarge plant. Some of these activities include:

Planting a pollinator garden, construction of bat boxes to support migrating bat species, and conducting education modules in health and safety equipment used in mining, water quality, reclamation and Arizona native animal and plant species.

She has also planned a monitoring study for the next year, so the girls can earn a Bronze Award from the Girl Scouts of America for service and biodiversity.

Efforts with the local Girl Scout troops are both for the local community and to earned Lafarge recognition in the Wildlife Habitat Council certification programs entitled Wildlife at Work and Corporate Lands for Learning. Sun City Aggregates now has an established program that demonstrates a commitment to biodiversity and local stakeholder engagement. As a result the facility is eligible for recognition from the global non-profit, the World Wildlife Fund.

This is just a brief summary of the contributions that Sara Cook, in her capacity as Manager of Environment and Public Affairs, makes for the Lafarge Aggregates operations in Arizona. Through her work, the flagship facility at Sun City Aggregates has built positive public relations with the neighboring communities, reduced citizen complaints from an average of 85 in 2007 to less than 5 in 2010, and facilitated the operations team in implementing an award winning environmental sustainability program.