

CGJA Excellence in Reporting Award

News Media

The Record

**Submitted by the San Joaquin
County Chapter of the CGJA**

2014

For Immediate Release

November 13, 2014

The Stockton Record (*The Record*) of San Joaquin County Receives News Media Excellence in Reporting Award

Burbank, Calif., November 13, 2014. The California Grand Jurors' Association has granted the News Media Excellence in Reporting Award to the Stockton Record, (*The Record*) of San Joaquin County, for its news coverage of "Fractured Oversight Fails to Serve At-Risk Youth," a 2012-13 San Joaquin County Grand Jury report.

The grand jury was concerned with group home care for at-risk youth throughout San Joaquin County. A state agency, the California Community Care Licensing Division, licenses 44 group homes run by 21 providers within the county. The grand jury investigated six of those providers covering 27 group homes and found well managed homes in some cases, while the conditions in other homes were so bad that operators failed to provide "a structured and safe environment for (those) they are required to care for and protect." In investigating the role and responsibilities of designated county-based oversight agencies, the grand jury discovered a severe lack of oversight.

The Record published 14 articles and 2 editorials on all of the grand jury's 2012-2013 reports, including 3 articles and 1 editorial dedicated to the "Fractured Oversight Fails to Serve At-Risk Youth," report.

Much of the group home oversight responsibility rests with state agencies over which the grand jury has no jurisdiction. Because of the grand jury's findings and the reporting by *The Record*, county officials have significantly influenced the state agency's compliance with its oversight obligations. In addition, the Governor added funding to its 2014-2015 budget for an additional 72 Community Care Licensing Division Inspectors to improve the oversight of group homes throughout California.

The Excellence in Reporting Award program recognizes individuals and media that have created positive changes in their communities and increased awareness of the California Grand Jury system. The award was presented on November 13 at the association's 33rd annual conference held in Burbank. Reporter Jennie Rodriguez-Moore, Gary Spaugh (foreperson of the 2012-13 Grand Jury), and Lou Meyer (investigating committee chair of the 2012-13 Grand Jury) accepted the award for *The Record*.

The California Grand Jurors' Association is a statewide nonprofit organization of former grand jurors with the mission "to promote government accountability by improving the training and resources available to California's 58 regular grand juries and educating the public about the substantial local government oversight and reporting powers these grand juries have."

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