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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## The Bay Institute Honors Whitney Dotson, Chris Austin, and Jeffrey Michael at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards

At the Bay Model Visitor Center in Sausalito, The Bay Institute hosted an awards ceremony honoring three very special individuals: Whitney Dotson, Chris Austin, and Jeffrey Michael, PH.D. Cynthia Koehler, Executive Director of the Water Now Alliance, delivered a powerfully moving Keynote address reminding us all that we are fortunate to enjoy the pristine vistas in and around the Bay Area due to the tireless efforts of advocacy and community action to preserve and conserve what we hold dear for our future generations.

Whitney Dotson, East Bay citizen activist, East Bay Regional Park District board member, recipient of the 2018 Bay Hero Award shared memories he and his brother playing in the wetlands, Breuner Marsh to be specific, which was renamed in 2014 to the Dotson Marsh due to the Dotson family's hard fought battle to keep that portion of the Richmond shoreline from being developed.



Whitney Dotson and family on stage after receiving the 2018 Bay Hero Award.



Aquarium  
of the Bay



Bay Model  
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EcoCenter at  
Heron's Head Park



Sea Lion  
Center



The Bay Institute



Bay Academy

Chris Austin received The Harold Gilliam Award for Excellence in Environmental Reporting. Ms. Austin created and operates the award winning website Maven's Notebook that provides comprehensive coverage of California water issues. Chris has taken her children all along Southern California's Owens Valley and has "chased the aqueducts" with them on family trips. She has truly been a leader in the world of water news.

Jeffrey Michael, Ph.D., Director, Center for Business and Policy Research, University of the Pacific, Stockton was presented with the Carla Bay Education Award. Jeffrey stressed the importance in accurately telling the truth when giving statistical information and brilliantly compared the economy to an ecosystem.



Left to right, back row: Ben Bleiman, Steve Machtinger, Harrison "Hap" C. Dunning, George Jacob, Gary Bobker

Left to right, front row: Cynthia Koehler, Whitney Dotson, Chris Austin, Jeffrey Michael

George Jacob, President and CEO of the Bay Ecotarium states, "We are proud to recognize their contributions and dedication to improving and protecting the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary and its watershed. Their actions inspire all of us" said George Jacob, President and CEO.

Gary Bobker, Program Director of The Bay Institute commented “Each of these individuals is exemplary in his or her own way: a leader in the fight for environmental justice and the protection of our wetlands; an economist who has debunked myths about the conflict between the economy and the environment; a blogger who has demystified the confusing and complex world of California water.”

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*The Bay Institute is a research, education, and advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the ecosystem of the San Francisco Bay, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and the estuary's tributary rivers, streams, and watersheds. Established in 1981, its scientists and environmental policy experts have worked nearly four decades to secure stronger protections for endangered species and their habitats; improve water quality; reform how California manages its water resources; and promote comprehensive ecological restoration from the **Sierra to the Sea™**.*

*The Bay Institute is one of the six branches of Bay Ecotarium-Northern California's largest non-profit watershed conservation group whose mission is to protect, restore, and inspire conservation of San Francisco Bay and its watershed, from the **Sierra to the Sea™**. More information can be found on the website at [www.bayecotarium.org](http://www.bayecotarium.org).*



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