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**OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA PARTNERS WITH
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND
STUDENTS ON HISTORY PROJECT**

**OMCA's New CSU Community History Project Features Co-Curated
Exhibits Exploring Contemporary California Topics**

**Exhibition wins Leadership in History Awards From the American
Association of State and Local History [Announced May 31, 2013]**

This release is available online at: www.museumca.org/pressroom

(Oakland, CA) January 7, 2013 [Updated May 31, 2013 to include announcement of AALSH Award]—The **Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)** is partnering with professors and students of the California State University (CSU) to **co-curate history exhibitions** featuring a diverse range of **relevant contemporary topics** affecting the state. The project, titled ***What's Happening, California?***, launches with an installation titled, ***What's Happening, Sacramento?***, which will be on view in the Museum's Gallery of California History **January 6** through **March 24, 2013**. The installation is the result of OMCA asking a class of nine history students at **California State University Sacramento**: "*what's going on in your community today?*"

Led by OMCA curators and Sacramento State History Professor **Lee Simpson**, in ***What's Happening, Sacramento?*** students document community perspectives on how important the Sacramento and American Rivers are to their region. The exhibition paints a rich picture of life in the Sacramento area through oral history interviews, interpretive text, short videos, and artifacts.

"In this project, the students became the exhibit team," said **Associate Curator of Contemporary History and Trends Suzanne Fischer**. "From shaping exhibit themes, to interviewing community members, to identifying artifacts, they had a hand in every aspect of the show. The project is really about the students' experiences doing contemporary community history, and will help visitors understand the context of water issues in the Sacramento area."

Topics explored in the exhibition include:

Sacramento's Rivers Bring Life (and Fear)

City Historians and other Sacramento residents discuss the dual role of the rivers, which are both a blessing, central to the foundation of the city and area agriculture, and a curse, threatening the area with yearly floods.

Working the Land that the Rivers Nourish

Sacramento's rivers have created some of the most fertile farmland in the world, and this section explores the many ways in which people work this land, from small-scale farmers practicing sustainable agriculture, to the activism that has come out of the farmworker movement of the 1960s. This section includes bandanas loaned from the Bandana Project, a campaign to support and empower farmworker women who are survivors of sexual abuse.

Creative Inspiration from the Rivers

Sacramento's rivers inspire many artists to create public art works that convey a strong sense of place. This section contains examples of public art in Sacramento, one of few cities that funds such projects, and explores the namesake of Tower Records, the renowned music store chain founded in Sacramento, that takes its name from the Sacramento River's Tower Bridge.

Recreation on the Rivers

This section explores how the rivers figure into the leisure activities of area residents, including frog hunting, which was once as popular in Sacramento rivers as fishing is today. Artifacts include frogging poles, a new acquisition, as well as a kayak from the annual charity triathlon Eppie's Great Race, in which competitors run, cycle and paddle for six miles along the American River.

What's Happening, California? reflects the Oakland Museum of California's mission to connect communities to the cultural and environmental heritage of California. The next installation, opening in **April 2013**, will feature a collaboration with **California State University Fullerton's** "Introduction to Public History" class, led by History Professor **Dr. Benjamin Cawthra**, and focuses on the effects of the recession in Orange County.

In **May 2013**, the **American Association of State and Local History (AASLH)** granted a **Leadership in History Award** to *What's Happening Sacramento?* According to AASLH, the awards "establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history in order to make the past more meaningful to all Americans. By publicly recognizing superior and innovative achievements, the Leadership in History Awards serve as an inspiration to others in the field."

The project was supported in part by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

ABOUT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) brings together collections of art, history and natural science under one roof to tell the extraordinary stories of California and its people. OMCA's groundbreaking exhibits tell the many stories that comprise California with many voices, often drawing on first-person accounts by people who have shaped California's cultural heritage. Visitors are invited to actively participate in the Museum as they learn about the natural, artistic, and social forces that affect the state and investigate their own role in both its history and its future. With more than 1.8 million objects, OMCA is a leading cultural institution of the Bay Area and a resource for the research and understanding of California's dynamic cultural and environmental heritage.

OMCA's transformation continues with the renovation of the Gallery of California Natural Sciences, which will be completed in June 2013.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) is at 1000 Oak Street, at 10th Street, in Oakland. OMCA is situated between downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt. Museum admission is \$12 general; \$9 seniors and students with valid ID, \$6 youth ages 9 to 17, and free for Members and children 8 and under. OMCA offers onsite underground parking and is conveniently located one block from the Lake Merritt BART station, on the corner of 10th Street and Oak Street. The accessibility ramp is located at the 1000 Oak Street main entrance. For more information, visit museumca.org.

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