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San Diego Youth to Celebrate 18th Annual Kids' Ocean Day on June 2nd

I Love A Clean San Diego to coordinate 1,000 kid beach cleanup and aerial art display

San Diego, CA – In exactly one week, close to 1,000 San Diego youth will descend on Crown Point Shores in Mission Bay to send a clear environmental message to the community. These students will perform a beach cleanup, then form a giant aerial art image of a shark spelling out the word “coexist”, reminding San Diegans about the importance of living in harmony with the marine environment.

On the morning of Thursday June 2nd, students from 10 local elementary schools will arrive at the beach, ready to pick up litter and debris discarded by careless beachgoers over the Memorial Day holiday weekend. Items like cigarette butts, food wrappers and plastic lids are often found as part of these cleanup events, and while they seem small and insignificant, these items pose a great threat to the marine environment. Many animals, including sharks, have been known to ingest marine debris. Plastic debris especially attracts and accumulates organic contaminants and toxins. As apex predators, sharks contain the highest levels of toxins because they ingest all the toxins present in the organism levels below them on the food chain over a very long life (20-70 years). This is known as biomagnification and because of this, the Environmental Defense Fund has issued a health advisory for all shark species due to elevated levels of mercury and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs).

Aside from coordinating the cleanup and aerial art formation in San Diego County, I Love A Clean San Diego staff have also provided education presentations to the children in their schools prior to the event. In the hour long assembly, students learn about San Diego's watersheds, common pollutants and their impacts on ecosystems and most importantly, how they can be good stewards and prevent pollution from entering the environment in the first place. Kids' Ocean Day, honoring World Oceans Day on June 8th, is being organized statewide by the California Coastal Commission. The San Diego event is part of the 18th Annual Kids' Adopt-a-Beach Cleanup, a month of Kids' Cleanups for 8,000 students at six beaches up and down the California coast and one across the country in Florida.

“Clean beaches and clean seas are in everyone's best interest,” said Peter Douglas, Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission. “The Commission has long been a leader in helping students of all ages learn about threats to our beaches and ocean. By cleaning beaches and giving a voice to ocean inhabitants, students up and down the state are putting into action what they've learned about the importance of clean seas. They remind us that each of us must do our part to care for the ocean, and that it's time we stop dumping garbage where it ends up on our beaches and in the ocean.” The Coastal Commission coordinates the program statewide and provides financial support from the Whale Tail License Plate Fund.

About I Love A Clean San Diego – I Love A Clean San Diego is the go-to organization for programs that enhance and conserve San Diego's environment. Through recycling, education, and cleanups of our most beloved areas, I Love A Clean San Diego is the only community based organization dedicated to the future of the entire county – from inland to the coast, in every community, for generations to come. For more information, visit www.cleansd.org.

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