



Recycling Saves Lives in Africa and Cambodia - Samohi Takes LifeStraw Challenge



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Students and teachers from Santa Monica High School recently partnered with Gabrielino High School's "Green Dream" eco-club to collect recyclables to raise money to buy one million LifeStraws for countries with unsafe drinking water. Each straw lasts for one year and filters 99% of bacteria, viruses, and parasites from potentially contaminated water sources. In the last two months, Samohi students from the Marine Biology Program, Team Marine, the Heal the Bay Surfrider Club, and the 10th grade A-house Advisory have collected over 10,000 plastic and glass bottles and aluminum cans from their campus, homes, and community. With the California Redemption Value set at 5 cents per container, it takes 110 recycled bottles to buy one lifestraw.

"I have seen much enthusiasm from my friends for the LifeStraw Program. It gives me hope that we can make a true difference in the world, especially by making water safer for children to drink," remarks student Megan Kilroy, Captain of Team Marine and the Solar Boat Crew.

"The program is a great opportunity for the youth to help save lives and the environment at the same time," comments student Celina Stilphen, new co-president of the Heal the Bay Surfrider Club.



"I was initially hesitant about joining the LifeStraw campaign because I didn't want to encourage my students to over consume single-use plastic beverage containers," says Benjamin Kay, Marine Biology teacher and eco-club mentor. "However, until recycling becomes a conscious habitual daily action practiced by everyone, there is still room to promote awareness. The sheer volume of recyclables we have amassed is getting students to think about waste reduction, and more and more students are switching to stainless steel reusable water bottles." Kay continues, "I'm inspired. One student, Ana Frandell, asked her mother, a teacher, to start LifeStraws at La Tijera K-8 School in Inglewood. They have now donated over 1800 bottles to LifeStraw. Samohi student, Maria Ruiz-Hernandez, independently raised \$50 dollars from her homeroom class to make a direct donation."

"The culture at the school is changing," adds Renee Klein, volunteer eco-coach and LifeStraw adviser at Samohi. "The City of Santa Monica Solid Waste Management recently donated 20 beautiful outdoor recycling-trash cluster bins to the campus, which have been a big win for LifeStraw."

The LifeStraw Program was developed by a team of eco-award winning Green Dream students from San Gabriel, California. The group is led by teacher Michael Winters and is partnered with the Community Without Walls organization and the Jane Goodall Institute Roots and Shoot Program. As a new partner to saving lives abroad, Samohi is seeking any and all interested parties to take part in the LifeStraw Challenge. Please see <http://www.watersolutionsforlife.org/index.html> for more information.

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