



**For Immediate Release**

**4-11-10**

**Samohi's Team Marine Receives Ocean Hero Award and Lobbies in Sacramento**



**Team Marine Wins Ocean Hero Award**  
 Back Row Left to Right: Sara Bayles (volunteer mentor), Melanie Delia, Valerie Wacker, Megan Kilroy, Eileen Flores, Devany Garcia, Ashley Hook (volunteer mentor)  
 Bottom Row Left to Right: Danny Franco, Raphael Mawrence, Jacob Hassett, Kou Collins, Benjamin Kay (Coach)



**Team Marine with Assemblywoman Julia Brownley**



**Team Marine with Senator Fran Pavley**



**Team Marine with Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal**



**Team Marine with Assemblyman Kevin De Leon and Sonia Diaz from Heal the Bay**



**Team Marine with Former Secretary for Natural Resources, Mike Chrisman**





Team Marine with Assemblyman Mike Feuer



Team Marine in front of Capitol Building



Team Marine inside Capitol Building under dome



Team Marine attend Monterey Bay Aquarium on Cannery Row wearing Santa Monica's "I am Sustainable" tshirts



Team Marine camp along Big Sur Coast



Team Marine enjoy Big Sur Coast



**April 11, 2010 ~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Last Monday April 5 during Spring Break, nine students on Santa Monica High School's Team Marine (Melanie Delia, Valerie Wacker, Megan Kilroy, Eileen Flores, Devany Garcia, Danny Franco, Raphael Mawrence, Jacob Hassett, Kou Collins) traveled by van to Sacramento to be part of Ocean Day at the California State Capitol Building on March 6. Representing the youth, the students met with various assembly members, senators, and staff to support different bills that would reduce plastic marine debris and curb carbon dioxide emissions. They also encouraged state officials to establish a comprehensive network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that follow the scientific guidelines and draft new legislation that would make environmental sustainability a core subject in k-12 grade levels. The students also had a chance to lobby alongside various environmental organizations, including Heal the Bay. That evening, Team Marine attended a formal reception and sustainable seafood banquet with numerous state officials and ocean advocates and was given an Ocean Hero Award by a California steering committee composed of CalCoast, Environment California, Heal the Bay, the NRDC, Ocean Conservancy, San Diego Coastkeeper, and Surfrider Foundation. Lester Snow, Secretary for Natural Resources welcomed the students that evening, and Mike Chrisman, a director for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and former Secretary for Natural Resources presented the award to the students for their many contributions toward protecting the marine environment. Returning home along the coast, Team Marine visited the Monterey Bay Aquarium and camped in beautiful Big Sur.

Valerie Wacker of Team Marine commented, "We were honored to be recognized by such important people. We were the only ones there who were under 30, and we were treated like adults."

Jacob Hassett of Team Marine remarked, "Being on Team Marine and receiving this prestigious award has made me realize that this generation of youth may have the gift that can change the world."

Raphael Mawrence of Team Marine stated, "Being in Sacramento with my peers was one of the most memorable experiences of my life and showed how the youth can make the greatest impact of all."

Coach Benjamin Kay said, "For both the students and us mentors, the experience was a crash-course in how state government operates, and we all learned so much. The students were very well received by all state officials, and it reinforced the importance of people voicing their opinions to their representatives."

Team Marine is an environmental science-based eco-action group of teens dedicated to raising awareness about sustainable solutions to the global climate, energy, and plastic pollution crises through scientific research, educational outreach, community service, pop art and culture, multimedia, social networking, and community partnerships. Team Marine are former winners of the QuikScience and Edison Challenges, Generation Earth's Most Sustainable Project Award, August R. Veenker Award, The Climate Community Citizen of the Week, and the My Better Lifestyle Award given by the Los Angeles Lakers and East West Bank. For more information, please see the students' website [teammarine.org](http://teammarine.org) or their blog <http://teammarine.blogspot.com/>

#### **CONTACTS**

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