



**For Immediate Release**

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# **Samohi's Team Marine Wins in QuikScience and Edison Challenges**



QuikScience Challenge Open House event at Quiksilver Headquarters, Huntington Beach. LtoR: Raphael Mawren, Melanie Delia, Jacob Hassett, Eileen Flores, Valerie Wacker, Megan Kilroy, Benjamin Kay (coach), Photo courtesy of Bob Kilroy



Edison Challenge Recognition Event at California Science Center, Los Angeles. LtoR: Bill Nye the Science Guy (presenter), Daniel Franco, Devany Garcia, Kou Collins, Celina, Katie Rowbotham, Benjamin Kay (Coach), Photo courtesy of Bob Kay



Edison Challenge Recognition Event at California Science Center, Los Angeles. LtoR: Stuart Hemphill (Senior Vice President, Power Procurement, Southern California Edison), Daniel Franco, Kou Collins, Devany Garcia, Celina, Katie Rowbotham, Benjamin Kay (Coach), Howard Gillman (Dean, USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences), Photo courtesy of Lindsey Jurca

#### April 20, 2010 ~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

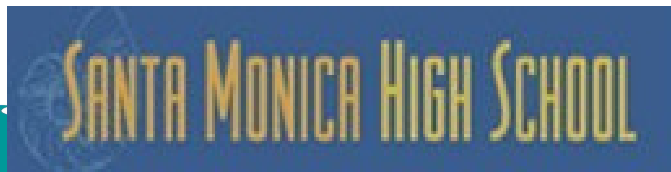
Santa Monica High School's environmental science and sustainability group, Team Marine, placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in this year's QuikScience Challenge and 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Edison Challenge, competitions co-sponsored by the USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies along with the Quiksilver Foundation and Edison International, respectively. This year's QuikScience team was led by **Megan Kilroy, Valerie Wacker, Jacob Hassett, Raphael Mawrence, Eileen Flores and Melanie Delia**, and the Edison team by **Kou Collins, Katie Rowbotham, Daniel Franco, Celina Stilphen and Devany Garcia**. Students will receive an extended over-night adventure vacation to the USC Wrigley Institute on Catalina Island. The over 100 participating middle and high school teams between the QuikScience and Edison Challenges are judged on the scope, creativity, and academic rigor of their various service learning and outreach projects.

For the past year, Team Marine has engaged in extensive scientific research, educational outreach, community service, pop art and culture, multimedia, social networking, and community partnerships to promote environmental sustainability in their community. This year, the students reached an estimated three million people through their classroom presentations, public speeches, Youtube videos, website, blogs, twitter, and news media.

Student projects varied by team. Team Marine QuikScience focused on raising awareness about solutions to our global plastic pollution, climate, and energy crises while Team Marine Edison (a.k.a. "The Lab Coats") focused on the Surfrider Foundation Teach and Test Ocean Water Quality Monitoring Program and the Recycle for LifeStraws Program. While varied in focus, the two teams frequently collaborated with one another and recruited numerous peers and community members to participate in their endeavors.

Some of their achievements this year include producing an educational documentary about plastic marine debris, making how-to videos for the Teach and Test and LifeStraw Programs, collecting 26,764 recyclables to raise





money to buy and send water-purifying LifeStraws to Cambodia and Africa, conducting a waste characterization study on marine debris around the Pico-Kenter and Venice storm drains, performing research on the buoyancy of disposable plastics, building a predictive model for plastic accumulation in near- and offshore marine habitats, organizing and leading a large student march through the city to promote a ban on single-use plastic bags and water bottles, lobbying state officials in Sacramento to adopt bills that would reduce plastic marine debris and green house gas emissions, building and racing a 16" solar boat for the 2010 Solar Cup, testifying at public hearings to persuade the Blue Ribbon Task Force and stakeholders to adopt the scientific recommendations for marine protected areas being established in Southern California, speaking in front of 6,000 youth at the Los Angeles Environmental Youth Conference, instituting a mentorship program for local middle school students to teach them about ocean water quality, developing and teaching their new 10R sustainable curriculum to community members all over LA county, and filming with Teen Nickelodeon for the Halo Award TV show.

Valerie Wacker says, "Team Marine has inspired me to learn more about the ocean and take action to protect it, improve it, and excite others to love it."

Celina Stilphen comments, "Being on Team Marine has taught me that our environment is fragile and that youth have the ability to create a sustainable planet for many generations to come."

Devany Garcia, remarks, "I have learned so much about the environment and what we need to do to preserve the Earth, and I am so happy that we are continuing on with our projects."

Jacob Hassett explains, "Every time Team Marine meets, spirits are high. We laugh together, learn a lot about each other, and become really close. My favorite memories were when we worked exceptionally hard on something and then completed it. We would all then come together and celebrate with high fives and music."

Kou Collins states, "This has been one of the best experiences of my life, and I'm already looking forward to making more amazing memories with the next set of Team Marine members."

Coach Benjamin Kay says, "These science-based environmental stewardship competitions provide students an excellent structural framework in which to carry out their service learning and outreach projects. Students end internalizing the message of their eco-projects, sharing their knowledge with vast numbers of people, and becoming outstanding candidates for university and lead positions in the rapidly expanding green economy."

Team Marine is an environmental science-based eco-action group of teens dedicated to cultivating environmental stewardship and conservation. Team Marine are former winners of the Ocean Hero Award, the QuikScience and Edison Challenges, Generation Earth's Most Sustainable Project Award, Samohi's 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** or their blog <http://teammarine.blogspot.com/>

#### **More Info on QuikScience and Edison Challenges:**

<http://www.usc.edu/org/cosee-west/quikscience/QuikScienceChallenge.html>

<http://www.usc.edu/org/edisonchallenge/>

#### **CONTACTS**

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