



NEWS

Glendale Unified School District

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NEWS ADVISORY

CLARK MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKE POSITIVE ACTION TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT

Effort Provides Chance to Win Part of \$500,000 in Grants and Scholarships

Glendale, CA, January 28, 2015—The Kelp Huggers, a team of nine students from Clark Magnet High School, have advanced and will now compete in the Final Challenge segment of the eighth annual Lexus Eco Challenge.

The Lexus Eco Challenge, created by Lexus and Scholastic, was designed to educate young people about the environment and to inspire them to create a better world. The national contest encourages middle and high school students to develop and implement environmental programs that positively impact their communities.

The students at Clark Magnet High have accepted the challenge by taking a stand and proving that a small group can bring about big changes. After carefully studying the local environment, the students have developed an Action Plan they feel will benefit their local community.

The Kelp Huggers Environmental GIS Team tackled the issue of marine debris in the challenge. Trash enters the ocean when litter is swept through the streets to the storm drains that directly lead to the ocean. They wanted to spread awareness of the harmful effects of trash on marine life, so they took the initiative to reduce the amount of litter in their area.

The Kelp Huggers goal was to crowd source their project to maximize the impact and create a culture of marine stewardship through Litterati and social media such as Instagram. Litterati is a movement on Instagram with a goal of cleaning up the litter and the planet. The Kelp Huggers succeeded in properly disposing thousands of pieces of litter and getting hundreds involved in the Litterati Movement. They also spoke at multiple events including the Oceans GIS Forum, GIS Day, and the school wide Ocean Defenders presentation about the negative impacts of marine debris. In addition, they mentored Wilson Middle School students and encouraged them to submit their own Lexus Eco Challenge project. The Kelp Huggers are now expanding their project globally and are hoping to make a lasting impact on the world.

The community is invited to support the team's Action Plan by participating in an anti-litter campaign. There are four easy steps that anyone can do to participate in the program:

Step 1: Find litter

Step 2: Take a picture using your Instagram account

Step 3: Hashtag your photo with #Litterati and tag our account @_marinedebris (in the picture, not a comment)

Step 4: Enable PhotoMap

Step 5: Throw away the trash

If everyone were to pick up the trash they saw, then marine debris would not be a global issue. With Litterati people can see how much trash is impacting our neighborhoods as well as our oceans. Currently, Litterati is posted for land-based trash; however the Kelp Huggers have introduced Litterati to ocean-based trash as well.

Lexus and Scholastic will choose eight First Place winning teams nationwide as well as two Grand Prize winning teams. The First Place winning teams will each receive a total of \$15,000 in grants and scholarships. The Grand Prize winning teams will each win a total of \$30,000.

Potential winners will be notified on or about March 16, 2015, by email.

For more information about this local environmental movement or to volunteer, contact:

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