



2025

A Year of Impact

2025 Recap

Now in its fifth year, Stand Up To Trash brings together families, youth leaders, educators, cultural partners and volunteers to protect our coastline through hands on environmental education and community action across South Orange County.

Throughout 2025, Stand Up To Trash engaged 2,700 participants through beach cleanups, harbor cleanups, youth programs, cultural learning days, school partnerships and community events. Together, volunteers removed 3,500 pounds of waste from beaches, harbor waters, streets, parks and public spaces, preventing debris from entering the ocean and harming wildlife.

In addition to cleanup efforts, Stand Up To Trash emphasized education as a critical tool for long term change. Monthly **Lunch & Learn** programs explored topics such as watershed connections, microplastics and human health, Plastic Free July and creative ways to reduce waste.

Youth-focused initiatives expanded access to ocean education for Title 1 schools and under-resourced communities, offering sailing experiences, marine science lessons and leadership opportunities that many students would not otherwise experience.

Community driven efforts extended beyond cleanups. A clothing swap kept 900 pounds of textiles in circulation, while ongoing recycling efforts diverted aluminum and plastic from the waste stream.

The **Harbor Helpers** program provides meaningful, hands on learning experiences for students enrolled in **STEPS** (Student Transition Educational Programs-special needs) classes. Students help intercept litter in the harbor before it can reach the open ocean, while building confidence, teamwork, and a deeper connection to the environment.

In 2025, Harbor Helpers participants removed 146.07 pounds of waste from the harbor, proving that inclusive education and environmental action go hand in hand

Stand Up To Trash demonstrates that when individuals come together neighbors, students, families and partners, meaningful change happens. *By pairing action with education and fostering a strong sense of responsibility and connection to place, we continue to inspire people of all ages to take action for the places they call home.*



Lunch & Learn Program Audience

Community Participation & Litter Removed

This year, 2,700 participants rolled up their sleeves and took part in our cleanups, programs and events.

Together, we removed more than 3,500 pounds of waste from beaches, harbor waters, jetties (paying special attention to discarded fishing line and lures) as well as sidewalks, streets and parks throughout our community.

Every piece collected is one less threat to wildlife and one less item drifting into our ocean.



Lunch & Learn Highlights



Each month, we hosted a beach cleanup followed by our Lunch & Learn program, engaging more than 1,200 participants in inspiring educational talks that helped our community understand how everyday choices impact the ocean and one another.

2025 Topics Included:

- Understanding our watershed
- How loving ourselves translates to caring for our planet
- UCI Capstone student environmental presentations
- The history of Doheny
- How Dana Point became the Whale Watching Capital of the World
- World Oceans Day celebration
- Plastic Free July challenges and solutions
- PADI AWARE actions
- Microplastics and how they affect our health
- Our impactful Clothing Swap
- How we repurpose plastic into new creations

These educational events turned learning into a fun, interactive, community powered experience.

Clean California City



Dana Point

A CLEAN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY

AWARDED
SEPTEMBER 2025



We led the effort that helped our city become one of California's first 30 Clean California Designated Cities.

A major win for local action!

Community Leadership Recognition



Our Founder, **Vicki Patterson** was honored with the *Woman of the Year* Award, the *Excellence in Environmental Stewardship* Award and the *Women Making a Difference* Award, recognizing tireless leadership and a deep commitment to our community.



Youth Leadership



Our High School Club consistently shows up and goes above and beyond, stepping in wherever help is needed and leading by example through their dedication and follow-through.



Our 8-year-old Ambassador Henry Farris, led 5 school cleanups, engaging 111 students and removing more than 73 pounds of waste.

Harbor Helpers

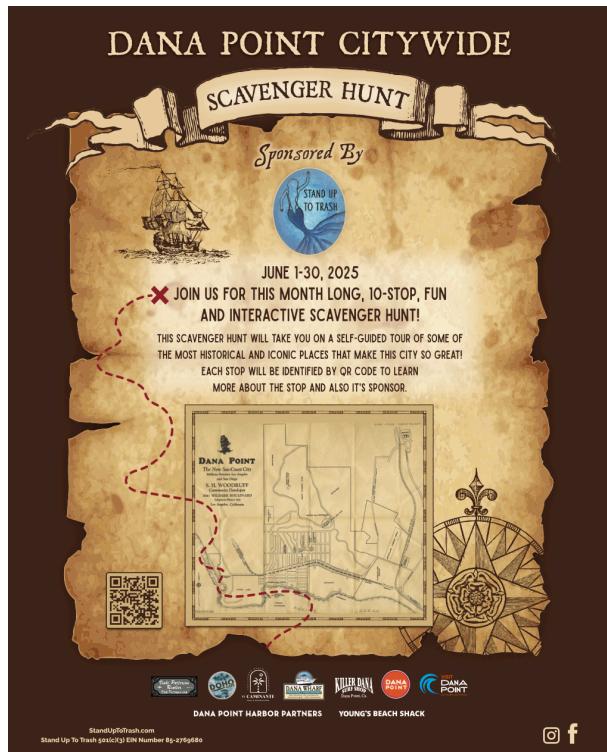


The Harbor Helpers Program is dedicated to empowering students with special needs to actively participate in environmental preservation efforts and make a positive impact on the Dana Point Harbor community.

In 2025, the students removed Harbor helpers 146.07 lbs of waste from entering our ocean.

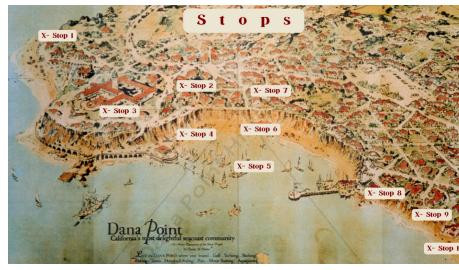


Citywide Month Long Scavenger Hunt



Our annual Scavenger Hunt has quickly become one of the most joyful ways our community connects with our local coastline.

Designed as an adventure for all ages, the hunt leads families, friends and neighbors on a playful journey through Dana Point's hidden stories, ocean connections and local history, all while shining a light on how our everyday choices affect the water that surrounds us.



Sea The Change on Malama Kai



Our floating classroom

An immersive, hands on sailing experience that brings ocean education directly to at risk and under privileged youth.

Now in its 5th year, we've taken over 500 students on transformative sails, seeing firsthand how plastic impacts the ocean empowering them to take action.

Whether it's their first time on a boat or their first time seeing the ocean, every child leaves connected to the ocean.

Plastic People Screening



Our screening of *Plastic People: The Hidden Crisis of Microplastics* brought the community together to learn about how plastic pollution doesn't just affect the environment, it's now being found inside our bodies, from blood to organs, raising urgent questions about health and exposure.

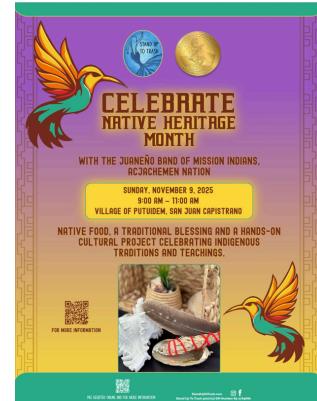
The award-winning documentary follows science journalist Ziya Tong and leading researchers as they investigate our global addiction to plastic and the growing threat that microscopic plastic particles pose to human health, inspiring meaningful conversation and action.

Native American Heritage Month with the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation



Our Cultural Day opened with a traditional sage burning and blessing, followed by meaningful learning about its significance and respectful practices.

Participants also explored the importance of kiicha huts and shared fry bread together, deepening cultural understanding through experience.



Clothing Swap



Our Community Clothing Swap kept reuse at the center of our community.

With donations of men's, women's and children's clothing, along with shoes and accessories, families filled countless reusable bags with items that stayed in circulation instead of heading to the landfill!

Kids discovered new to them treasures, parents found everyday essentials and families shared in the joy of reusing what we already have.

Every bag reused meant fewer textiles in the landfill and more care circulating throughout our community.



Santa Paddle



Ending the year with festive fun on the water, the Santa Paddle brings paddlers of all ages together in costume for a joyful community celebration in Dana Point Harbor.



Families and friends grab kayaks and paddleboards, dress as Santas, elves and reindeer and share smiles, laughter and connection on the water.

Wrapping up the year by celebrating community, creativity, and caring for the place we love.

