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## Santa Monica Students Champion Sustainability

*High School Teens Recognized for Excellent Environmental Sustainability Projects*

**Santa Monica, Calif.** – Students from Santa Monica High School have achieved the perfect trifecta, receiving first, second and third place in the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Sustainable Santa Monica Student Poster Contest for their excellent artistic expression, creativity and interpretation of this year's theme "Do More to Use Less."

Advanced Placement Environmental Science students Valerie Young, Yanjun Li and Anastasia Khromova were awarded grand prize, second place and honorable mention for creating posters that addressed the question "How can you raise awareness about the drought and cut back water use by 20 percent?"

"Our students want to make the world a better place and they recognize how effective grass-roots advocacy can be to affect positive change," Superintendent Sandra Lyon said. "They are committed to advocating for a greener, more sustainable world by spreading knowledge to their peers through diverse science and art projects."

The Samohi students were recognized at the Sustainability Student Poster Contest Awards Ceremony and Celebration May 27, hosted at the Annenberg Community Beach House.

Their award-winning posters – on display at the Pico Library from June 1 through July 4 – are one of several projects spearheaded by Samohi students to continue to raise awareness about global marine debris, energy and climate change.

Students were encouraged to enter the contest by science instructor Benjamin Kay, who engages youth in real-world research through service learning projects and educational outreach activities focused on environmental sustainability.

Kay also serves as advisor to Team Marine, a multi-award winning environmental science teen action group at the school that seeks effective solutions to modern-day challenges, such as global plastic pollution, climate and ocean acidification crises.

Team Marine members Martin Liu, Kimberly Fuentes and Zoe Parcells recently competed at the California State Science Fair May 19 after receiving first place at the Los Angeles County Science Fair for a year-long research project that focused on long-term cigarette accumulation rates for seven major streets.

"It was an amazing and educational experience to lead this yearlong study," Team Marine president Kimberley Fuentes said. "Through our research, we found that our data supported the implementation of a city wide ban on cigarette smoking. We plan to pursue this smoking ban and testify to the Santa Monica City Council to advocate for a cleaner, greener world."

**Photo Captions:**

**TM – Photo 1: Santa Monica High School AP Environmental Science students were recognized at an awards banquet May 27 for receiving first, second and third place at the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Sustainable Santa Monica Student Poster Contest.**

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*As a community of learners, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District works together in a nurturing environment to help students be visionary, versatile thinkers; resourceful, life-long learners; effective, multilingual communicators and global citizens.*